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LOS ANGELES COUNTY

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May 18, 2006

The Honorable Board of Supervisors  
County of Los Angeles  
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
500 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**APPROVAL OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY FOOD POLICY AFFECTING  
VENDING MACHINES, FUNDRAISING, AND  
COUNTY-SPONSORED MEETINGS  
(All Districts - 3 Votes)**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:**

1. Approve and instruct County Departments to implement the Physical Activity and Nutrition Task Force's (PANTF) Los Angeles County Food Policy (attached) affecting vending machines, fundraising, and County-sponsored meetings.
2. Instruct all County Departments to include the Los Angeles County Food Policy guidelines in all future contracts with vending machine operators.
3. Instruct affected departments to work with existing vending machine vendors to implement voluntary changes to the menu offerings under current contract.
4. Instruct the Department of Health Services (DHS) to further develop its plan for implementing the Los Angeles County Food Policy that is attached to this letter.

**PURPOSE OF RECOMMENDED ACTIONS/JUSTIFICATION:**

In response to growing concern about overweight and obesity, on January 29, 2002, your Board convened The Los Angeles County Blue Ribbon Task Force on Children and Youth Physical Fitness to develop recommendations aimed at reversing the upward trends of childhood overweight and physical inactivity in Los Angeles County. On August 27, 2002, your Board approved the Task Force's report entitled, "Paving the Way for Physically Fit and Healthy Children" and established the Physical Activity and Nutrition Task Force (PANTF) to implement the recommendations in this report. One of the six key actions approved by your Board calls on the County to "implement a model comprehensive worksite wellness program for County of Los Angeles employees..." that includes "policies and environments that support healthy eating, physical activity participation and breastfeeding promotion." The Los Angeles County Food Policy was created to implement this key action and specifically addresses food and beverages offered in County-contracted vending machines, sold for fundraising purposes and provided at County-sponsored meetings.

*To improve health  
through leadership,  
service and education.*

313 N. Figueroa Street, Suite 912  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Tel: (213) 240-8101  
Fax: (213) 481-0503

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### **FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING:**

While the exact fiscal impact is unknown, it is possible that revenues from vending machines may decrease upon implementation of this policy. A decrease in revenue may result in vendors removing some vending machines. In a recent pilot project involving schools within the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) that replaced vending machine food and beverage items with healthier options, a majority experienced some revenue loss. However, those schools that made a concerted effort to inform students about the new policy experienced revenue gains.

### **FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS:**

According to the Los Angeles County Health Survey, more than half (55%) of the county's adult population is either overweight or obese and approximately 40% of children and youth are overweight, or at risk of becoming overweight. Studies have shown that obesity and overweight contribute to the rising rates of type 2 diabetes in both children and adults.

Studies have also demonstrated that there is a definite relationship between both the physical and social environment at the workplace and the health behaviors of employees. The work environment can either undermine or promote the good intentions of an employee to make healthy choices. In light of this research, several government bodies in California have implemented policies that increase access to healthier food and beverage options to encourage healthier eating at the workplace. In 2004, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors and the Los Angeles Unified School District adopted and implemented policies that set standards for and limits on beverages, snacks and replacement meals sold respectively, at County or school campuses. The City of Los Angeles Child Nutrition Policy adopted by the Los Angeles City Council on February 18, 2005, mandates that healthy items must comprise a minimum of 25% of total items offered in vending machines and sales at city facilities. In addition, the City of Baldwin Park adopted standards based on SB 12 and SB 965 for all snack and beverages sold in city facilities.

Drawing upon the example of these entities, the Los Angeles County Food Policy promotes healthier food and beverage options in three different areas:

- Food and beverage vending machines- Provides mandatory guidelines for foods and beverages sold in County-contracted food and beverage vending machines. Based on the criteria specified in SB 12 and SB 965, which detailed nutritional requirements for food and beverages sold at California schools, these guidelines provide restrictions on the calorie, fat, saturated fat, trans fat, sodium and sugar content of food items. A list of examples of foods and beverages that comply with these guidelines is included in the Los Angeles County Food Policy.
- Fundraising- Offers optional recommendations for foods sold for fundraising purposes based on the guidelines established in the food and beverage vending machine policy. Organizers of fundraisers are encouraged to choose healthier food options and non-food items to sell. A list of examples of appropriate food and non-food items are provided in the Los Angeles County Food Policy.



- County-sponsored meetings and events - Encourages County employees, on a voluntary basis, to offer healthier food options at County-sponsored meetings and events, based on the guidelines established in the food and beverage vending machine policy. General recommendations emphasizing healthier cooking methods, selection of nutritious foods and promotion of fruit and vegetable consumption are provided for foods where no nutrient information is available. A list of ideas for healthier foods to offer at County-sponsored meetings is included in the Los Angeles County Food Policy.

Included in the Los Angeles County Food Policy is a specific timeline, which follows:

- By January 1, 2007, 50% of all foods and 50% of all beverages in County-contracted vending machine within County facilities and offices must meet the guidelines as explained in the Los Angeles County Food Policy.
- By January 1, 2009, 75% of all foods and 75% of all beverages in County-contracted vending machines within County facilities and offices must meet the guidelines found in the Los Angeles County Food Policy.
- By January 1, 2011, 100% of all foods and 100% of all beverages in County-contracted vending machines within County facilities and offices must meet the guidelines found in the Los Angeles County Food Policy.

Employees who conduct fundraising activities held during work hours on County sites, and who organize County-sponsored meetings and events shall be encouraged to follow the recommendations detailed in the Los Angeles County Food Policy.

#### **CONTRACT PROCESS:**

Existing contracts: Some county facilities may have vending machine contracts that will be in effect past the milestone dates. In such cases, the County would be expected to make a sincere effort to obtain voluntary compliance or partial compliance from current vendors by the milestone dates.

Future contracts: The Los Angeles Food Policy should be part of all future vending machine contracts. Therefore, all future Request for Proposals (RFPs) will include that vendors will comply with the criteria set forth in the County's Food Policy. Based on the Los Angeles Unified School District's experience, it is anticipated that there will be willing and prepared vendors to comply with the new guidelines and to participate in a bid process, especially an exclusive bid process.

**IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PRODUCTS):**

Implementation of this policy would affect County-contracted vending machine suppliers by requiring them to change the products they offer to meet the Los Angeles County Food Policy guidelines. In addition, County employees would be encouraged to offer healthier food and beverage options for fundraisers and at County-sponsored meetings. It is anticipated that County employees who purchase items from vending machines, participate in fundraisers or attend County-sponsored meetings will be positively impacted by the policy by having a broad range of healthier foods from which to choose.

Respectfully submitted,



Bruce A. Chernof, M.D.  
Director and Chief Medical Officer

BAC:ch

Attachments

c: Chief Administrative Officer  
County Counsel  
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors  
Director, Department of Parks and Recreation